

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-03 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-10

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SUBJ: PRESS REACTION TO CHARGES OF CIA INTERVENTION IN CHILE

SUMMARY: LOCAL PRESS REACTION TO THE CIA CONTROVERSY WAS SLOW IN COMING AND HAS REMAINED ELATIVELY MODERATE IN AMOUNT. NO STORIES HAVE RECEIVED PROMINENT PLAY. WIRE SERVICES, INCLUDING PRENSA LATINA, HAVE PROVIDED MOST OF PUBLISHED MATERIAL, ALTHOUGH SOME LOCAL COLUMNISTS HAVE PICKED UP THE THEME. REACTION TO PRESIDENT'S "JUSTIFICATION" OF INTERVENTION HAS BEEN STRONGER THAN REACTION TO INTERVENTION ITSELF. TWO GOVERNMENT-CONTROLLED NEWSPAPERS HAVE WARNED THAT THE CHILEAN EXAMPLE COULD BE REPEATED IN PANAMA. END SUMMARY

1. COVERAGE ON CIA-RELATED AFFAIRS WAS QUITE LIMITED IN THE PANAMANIAN PRESS THROUGHOUT SEPTEMBER WITH AN OCCASIONAL WIRE SERVICE REPORT APPEARING WITHOUT EMPHASIS ON A FRONT PAGE OR ON INTERIOR PAGES. THE ENGLISH-LANGUAGE PRESS HAS CARRIED SEVERAL LOW-KEY ARTICLES SUCH AS A BRIEF AP REPORT PUBLISHED SEPTEMBER 30 CONCERNING MRS. ALLENDE'S DESCRIPTION OF STATEMENTS BY PRESIDENT FOR AND SECRETARY OF STATE KISSINGER AS "SHAMELESS ATTEMPTS TO JUSTIFY THE INTERVENTION AND DELUDE WORLD OPINION." THE SPAINSH LANGUAGE GOVERNMENT-CONTROLLED PRESS CARRIED FEWER SUCH REPORTS UNTIL THE BEGINNINGS OF OCTOBER BUT HAS
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USED HIGHLY POLEMICAL PRENSA LATINA COVERAGE ON OCCASION SINCE THEN. A LONG PL ARTICLE OF OCTOBER 2 ENTITLED "THE

CIA AND FASCISM ORDERED THE DEATH OF GENERAL PRATS"
REFERRED TO THE RECENT ASSASSINATION IN ARGENTINA OF THE
FORMER VICE PRESIDENT OF CHILE UNDER ALLENDE. ON OCTOBER 5
MATUTINO HEADLINED ON ITS LAST PAGE A PL ARTICLE CHARGING
THAT CIA AGENTS USED CURRENCY BLACK MARKET TO PRUCHASE CHILEAN
ESCUDOS, PRODUCING THEREBY ECONOMIC DISLOCATIONS OF MORE THAN
\$40 MILLION.

2. SOME OF THE MATERIAL PRINTED ON THE CIA HAS BEEN
NON-POLEMICAL. A TWO AND A HALF PAGE ARTICLE IN THE
SUNDAY DOMINICAL OF OCTOBER 6, UNATTRIBUTED BUT APPARENTLY
FROM US PRESS SOURCES, EXPLORED THE ENTIRE USG INTELLIGENCE
SYSTEM WITH EMPHASIS ON THE CIA. THE ARTICLE PREDATED THE
CHILEAN REVELATIONS AND PRAISED THE AGENCY FOR THE EXCELLENCE OF
SOME OF ITS WORK (SUCH AS PREDICTING THE SOVIET INVASION OF
CZECHOSLOVAKIA AND ISRAEL'S SWIFT VITORY IN 1967) WHILE BLAMING
IT FOR SUCH FIASCOS AS THE BAY OF PIGS.

3. CRITICAL COMMENT BY THE LOCAL PRESS HAS CONDEMNED
THE CIA INTERVENTION IN CHILE'S INTERNAL AFFAIRS AND
CONCLUDED THAT EARLIER INTERVENTIONS IMPLY THAT THE CIA
IS CONTINUING THE PRACTICE. JOAQUIN BELENO'S OCTOBER 3
COLUMN IN EL PANAMA AMERICA ASSERTED THAT "PRAT'S DEATH
BENEFITS PINOCHET AND THE UNITED STATES BECAUSE IT
ELIMINATES THE MAN WHO AT ANY TIME...MIGHT HAVE RETURNED
TO POWER" AND CONCLUDED THAT THE CIA HAD A HAND IN PRAT'S
ASSASSINATION. HE CONTINUED: "THE CIA PLAN IS CLEAR:
ERRADICATE THE LEFTIST MOVEMENT IN URUGUAY, CHILE AND NOW
ARGENTINA....BUT THE YOUNG CHILEAN OFFICERS KNOW THAT PRATS
WAS RIGHT. THE CIA BOUGHT OFF THEIR CHIEFS AND...
ONLY AN INTERNAL UPRISING CAN RESTORE THEIR HONOR."

4. ON THE PREVIOUS DAY BELENO CITIED PRESIDNET FORD'S
JUSTIFICATION OF INTERVENTION IN CHILE ON GROUNDS OF US
SECURITY AS AN INDICATION THAT THE ASSASSINATION OF ANY
PANAMANIAN OFFICIAL WHO OPPOSES A SELL-OUT TREATY ON THE CANAL
COULD BE ORDERED. "IT MEANS THAT THEY COULD, IN THE NAME OF
THEIR SECURITY, INVADE OUR TERRITORY AND IMPOSE THEIR WILL
ON US..." HE WENT ON TO ASK "WHAT ASSURANCE DO PANAMANIAN
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HAVE THAT THE UNITED STATES WILL COMPLY WITH (THE PROVISIONS
OF) A NEW TREATY WITH PANAMA?" BELENO CONCLUDED "REMEMBER
WELL THE WORDS OF GERALD FORD AND LET US NOT PUT TOO MUCH
FAITH IN THE PROMISES OF GOOD WILL OF THE GRINGOS. OUR
LEADERS SHOULD KNOW THAT THEY (THE GRINGOS) PREPARE
REVOLUTIONS AND ASSASSINATE PRESIDENTS, ALL IN THE NAME
OF THE SECURITY OF THE UNITED STATES."

5. AN EDITORIAL IN MATUTINO ON OCTOBER 1 CALLED FOR
SOLIDARITY WITH VENEZUELA IN VIEW OF PRESIDENT FORD'S

"THREAT" OF AN INVASION BY THE UNITED STATES. CITING HIS JUSTIFICATION OF INTERVENTION BY THE CIA IN CHILE, THE EDITORIAL CHARGED THAT PANAMA'S REVOLUTIONARY PROCESS AND ITS PATRIOTIC DESIRE TO ERRADICATE THE COLONIALIST ENCLAVE OF THE CANAL ZONE MADE IT A POSSIBLE TARGET ALSO.

6. COMMENT: WE CAN EXPECT COLUMNISTS AND EDITORIALISTS TO CONTINUE TO USE AND REUSE THE CIA STORIES IN FUTURE ARTICLES TO REMIND THEIR READERS OF THE ALLEGED DANGERS WHICH THEY SEE PANAMA CONFRONTING.
JORDEN

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